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LETTER DATED 29 JANUARY 1991 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF VENEZUELA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE
SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to transmit to you, in the annex, the text of the information note issued by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Permanent Mechanism for Consultation and Concerted Political Action, Rio Group, on the conclusion of the meeting held at Caracas on 28 January 1991.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter, together with the aforesaid document, circulated as a Security Council document.

(Signed) Andrés AGUILAR M.
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Information note

The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Permanent Mechanism for Consultation and Concerted Political Action, Rio Group, meeting at Caracas on 28 January 1991, informed the public that they had held a full discussion during which they had considered the possible effects of the Middle East crisis on Latin America and had exchanged views on the development of the events in that region, as well as on other matters of common interest.

They agreed to reiterate their support for the resolutions of the Security Council of the United Nations and to renew their backing of the role which the Secretary-General of the United Nations has to play in promoting a solution to the conflict whereby it would be possible to restore peace in accordance with international law, to initiate multilateral efforts towards a comprehensive, peaceful and definitive settlement of the problems of the region, and the submission of a report on the developments in implementation of the Security Council resolutions.

They jointly condemned expansion of the conflict in the form of attacks on non-belligerent countries of the zone, such as Israel. They were in agreement on the need to ensure that the Geneva Conventions on the treatment of prisoners of war are strictly adhered to, and that the parties to the conflict refrain from the use of chemical or biological weapons and from mass or indiscriminate destruction.

They jointly expressed their alarm at the damage being inflicted on the environment as a result of the conflict.

They decided to give thought to the system of international security embodied in the Charter of the United Nations and the possible changes which that system would require in order to reflect international reality, and to its relationship with Latin American security to which it must assign an economic priority which is lacking at present.

They agreed to retain the question of the Middle East on the agenda of its periodic consultations and to assign to a committee, consisting of Chile, Colombia and Ecuador, the task of following the Gulf crisis in all its aspects, including the study of proposals and mechanisms which would enable the Group to make an effective contribution to the establishment of a new order of peace in the region, based on the participation of all parties involved and on implementation of all the resolutions of the United Nations, including the solution of the Palestine problem.

The Ministers agreed to send a message to the Secretary-General of the United Nations in order to express their backing of the steps which he is taking to promote peace in El Salvador, and to urge the parties to the conflict and the Secretary-General to intensify their efforts towards achieving an early solution.

The Ministers received with concern the report of the Special Mission which recently visited Panama and reiterated the need for the Panamanian Government to comply, in all cases, with the provisions on diplomatic asylum set forth in the Caracas Convention, of which Panama is a party.

The Ministers considered the reports submitted by the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Permanent Secretary of the Latin American Economic System (SELA) and the Executive Secretary of the Latin American Energy Organization (OLADE) on the effects of the crisis in the region.

The Ministers expressed their deep concern at the consequences of the conflict in the Gulf for the world economy and especially for the economies of Latin America and the Caribbean.

New indications of instability and uncertainty in the world economy affect the principal economic variables, such as growth, interest rates, investment, inflation and trade, and threaten to create even greater disruptions in regional efforts to adjust economies and promote economic and social development.

Accordingly, the Ministers agreed as follows:

To design and strengthen mechanisms to promote economic security in Latin America and the Caribbean in all areas where the region may be affected by the crisis and to undertake preparations in order to deal with unpredictable economic situations; they decided to request ECLAC and SELA to collaborate in assessing the possible economic consequences of the conflict in the Gulf.

In the field of energy, they agreed to tackle problems of supply and pricing, without prejudice to existing commercial agreements in the oil sector and in respect of other sources of energy as well. In that connection, they agreed to request OLADE to look into storage capacities, oil trade flows, available refining capacities and transport more thoroughly.

In the area of finance, they agreed to adopt financing mechanisms to soften the impact of energy price fluctuations on the economies of the region, as exemplified by the San José and Tuxtla agreements. They emphasized the need to accelerate the implementation of the commitment undertaken in the Caracas Declaration to establish a strategic investment fund for integration using resources obtained through increases in commodity price.

They agreed to hold an extraordinary meeting of Ministers of Energy to study the energy initiatives put forward at the present meeting. They also agreed to establish a standing evaluation committee to monitor external events that might affect the economies of Latin America and the Caribbean and the implementation of the measures adopted. They supported the holding of consultations among oil producers, consumers and operators, as proposed by the President of Venezuela at the United Nations.
